

tenure in Congress, I have fought to improve women's healthcare, advance pay equity, and make sure girls have access to every educational opportunity that is available to boys.

With the Trump administration now in the White House, I am very concerned that the significant progress made to improve women's lives are under threat of being diminished, rolled back or extinguished. I remain fully committed to standing up, speaking out and championing the rights of women and girls.

This past weekend I attended an event hosted by the International Institute of Minnesota (IIM) to celebrate International Women's Day. It was a tremendous honor to receive IIM's 2017 Olga Zoltai Award for Service to New Americans. Special thanks to Jane Graupman, IIM's amazing executive director, and Kitty Gogins, IIM's board chair and daughter of Olga Zoltai. IIM's staff works hard doing the important work of resettling refugees. Their work builds a strong foundation for new American families that helps them achieve success and self-sufficiency.

Unfortunately, the anti-immigrant executive orders issued by the Trump administration, especially the refugee ban, can only be called a betrayal of our values as Americans and the core beliefs that make this a great country.

As I said in my remarks upon receiving this special award, "There is amazing strength and perseverance in each and every refugee story. The millions of women, men and children who have found their way to America have made this country better. Their courage must now be our courage as we resist isolationism, bigotry, and the scapegoating of good people seeking freedom and a new life in America."

I include in the RECORD my full remarks and a brief biography of Olga Zoltai who was truly an amazing woman.

Throughout my career in Congress I have made the rights of women and girls a priority.

We want a more peaceful, prosperous world, a world where children are healthy and families are strong, then let us invest in women and girls.

The United States is the wealthiest nation on Earth. We must be investing in women and girls, not cutting funding and assistance that saves lives, protects the vulnerable and builds better futures.

Empowering women and girls is not controversial, it is essential. It means giving every girl the opportunity she deserves—the right—to go to school and receive an education. It means eliminating discrimination, exploitation and violence against women and girls—whether it be trafficking, forced marriage of girls, or pay discrimination right here in the United States.

Empowering women means access to employment, healthcare, and safe childcare. And, empowering women means asking a room full of women to think about standing up and be leaders—maybe running for elected office one day—for school board, city council, mayor, the state legislature, or the even the U.S. Congress.

I am sure that each of us here today is very concerned about new policies that are coming out of this White House that impact refugees. In my view, these policies are a betrayal of America's values and the core beliefs that make this a great country.

We must resist these close minded and harmful policies. We must resist in Congress, in the courts, and in our communities. But it is

also critical to continue to be welcoming, caring and embracing of all New Americans. It is more important than ever.

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Olga Zoltai was a refugee who dedicated her life to welcoming refugees. Olga's work is now our work and must continue this important work the same passion and commitment.

Thank you for this very special award—I will treasure it. And, I will carry Olga in my heart as we fight to keep America a country that welcomes refugees and strives to offer hope, opportunity and freedom to all people.

Thank you, Kitty. Thank you, Jane. And, thank you to everyone here today.

OLGA ZOLTAI, PATRON SAINT OF IMMIGRANTS

On Thursday, June 9, 2016, former Institute staff member Olga Zoltai passed away. Olga was a tireless advocate for refugees and immigrants. Her tenacity and dedication improved the lives of thousands of New Americans in our community. A refugee herself—at the age of 13, Olga and her family fled her hometown of Sopron, Hungary as Soviet forces invaded—Olga worked at the International Institute of Minnesota from 1971 to 1993. During her years at the Institute, Olga designed innovative programs that responded to the needs of New Americans, transforming and strengthening our community.

When Olga heard that a new federal program to resettle refugees was beginning in 1974, she knew the Institute had to do this work. The Institute's Executive Director was on his honeymoon in Thailand when Olga heard about this opportunity. No one knew exactly where in Thailand he was honeymooning, but they did know he would not be back until after the application deadline had passed. Not to be deterred, Olga began calling hotels to see if a guest matching his description was staying there. She eventually found him, received his approval, and applied. Thanks to Olga, the Institute has welcomed more than 25,000 refugees to our community.

Olga was the caseworker who welcomed the first Hmong refugees to Minnesota in February 1976. She got the call of their arrival the night before the family's 6 a.m. arrival. The youngest child arrived wearing just a t-shirt, but Olga and the church sponsoring the family brought blankets to the airport.

Olga Zoltai with her three children Kitty, Lili, and Peter (left to right).

It is now common for refugee resettlement agencies to have caseworkers who are from the communities they serve, and it was Olga who hired the first bi-lingual case manager in Minnesota.

Olga founded the Nursing Assistant Training Program in 1991 to provide New Americans access to entry-level jobs in healthcare. In the program's 25 years, more than 1,900 nursing assistants have been employed. At a recent Nursing Assistant graduation, the class speaker declared: "Today is the greatest accomplishment of our lives. Today, we begin our lives as caregivers. You are changing not just our lives, but our family's lives as well."

Additionally, Olga worked on hundreds of political asylum cases and was known to be a unwavering advocate for those the most complex cases.

"I was so lucky, you know?" Olga said when she reflected on her life's story. When her chance came, "I was able to help."

Olga was awarded the eponymous "Olga Zoltai Award for Outstanding Service to New Americans" at the Institute's International Women's Day Tea in March 2016.

TRIBUTE TO MAURICE L. "MAURI" WILLIAMSON

HON. TODD ROKITA

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a prominent Hoosier leader and my dear friend, Mr. Maurice L. (Mauri) Williamson who passed away on January 30, 2017 surrounded by his loving family.

Mauri was born in Economy, Indiana and spent his childhood participating in 4-H. He served in the Navy Medical Corps until 1946, after which he received his undergraduate degree from Purdue University in 1950. He was known throughout the state as the executive secretary of the Purdue University Ag Alumni Association, a position he held for 37 years. During his Purdue career, Mauri helped found the National Ag Alumni Development Association (NAADA) and started the Ag Alumni Fish Fry.

Mauri put a lot of care and dedication into his work. After graduating from Purdue, he returned to the family farm, but he soon found he was better suited spending his time with people rather than with plants and animals. In 1961, he founded the Pioneer Village at the Indiana State Fair to preserve and display the history of Indiana agriculture. Mauri held court there each summer, visiting with his ever-expanding legion of friends acquired through his lifetime commitment to Purdue and to agriculture. He had a deep love for the Indiana State Fair and only missed attending while serving in the Navy during World War II.

I was first introduced to Mauri when I served as Indiana's Secretary of State. He made it clear to me, in the way only he could do, the importance of farming and agriculture community to the past, present and future of Indiana. Even today, my family, and especially my two young sons, enjoys the fruit of his labor each August when we visit the Pioneer Village at the best State Fair in the nation. As a member of Congress, I continue to keep our past conversations in mind when voting on agriculture issues.

Mauri leaves June, his beloved wife of 68 years, two children, three grandchildren and five great grandchildren to carry on his legacy of service to fellow Hoosiers. I believe this world is a better place because of his compassionate service to our community, state and nation. Rest in peace, Mauri. He will not be forgotten.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE MICHIGAN STATE POLICE

HON. JACK BERGMAN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Mr. BERGMAN. Mr. Speaker, it's my honor to recognize the Michigan State Police as they celebrate their 100th Anniversary. We